CLAIMS

1. A method of fabricating a magnetic tag having a multiple number of information bits on its surface which method comprises forming some or all of the information bits by depositing magnetic material onto the surface by means of an electroless deposition reaction.

2. A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein some or all of the tag surface is coated with a deposition promoting material (as hereinbefore defined) in order to facilitate the deposition of a magnetic material coating from an electroless deposition solution onto the coated areas of the substrate.

3. A method as claimed in Claim 2 wherein the deposition promoting material is printed onto the substrate by a print transfer mechanism.

4. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the print transfer mechanism is ink-jet printing.

5. A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the deposited material is a soft magnetic material.

6. A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the electroless deposition reaction takes place in a magnetic biasing field.

7. A magnetic tag produced by the method of any one of the preceding claims.

8. A magnetic tag having a number of information bits on its surface comprising an arrangement of hard and soft magnetic materials wherein the soft magnetic materials are deposited onto the tag surface by the fabrication method claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 and the hard magnetic materials are deposited by screen printing an ink formulation loaded with hard magnetic materials.

9. A magnetic tag as claimed in claim 8 wherein the deposited hard magnetic material is arranged such that the soft magnetic materials experience a magnetic biasing field.

10. A magnetic tag as claimed in claim 9 wherein the hard magnetic material is deposited such that different information bits formed from soft magnetic materials experience different biasing fields.

11. A magnetic tag having a number of information bits on its surface comprising an arrangement of hard and soft magnetic materials wherein the soft magnetic materials are deposited onto the tag surface by the fabrication method claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 and a graded hard magnetic material is used as the whole of or part of the substrate of the tag.